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Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."

JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

Knowing as I do the number of people who would highly prize a file of Liberty, I am surprised at the small number of bids that reach me in response to my offer (described in another column). The man who wants such a file and makes a bid for it, even if his bid be not more than five cents, runs no risk of having to kick himself afterwards because some one else got it for four cents. Moral: Don't fail to bid, however small the amount may be.

John Most tells all the reporters that Berkman is an Individualist Anarchist. This champion of propaganda by deed shirks all responsibility as soon as the deed is done, and magnanimously gives others all the "glory." Generous man, Most! As a matter of fact, Berkman, like Most, is a Communist. He is more individualistic than Most only in this, — that he is a brave man and dares to do his own bomb-throwing, while Most is a coward and asks others to do the work in his stead.

There are no crocodile tears in the ducts of Burgess McLuckie. Though under indictment for murder in the second degree, he did not, on hearing of Berkman's act, exclaim theatrically, "Poor Mrs. Frick!" but, in a speech to ten thousand laborers at Youngstown directly after the shooting, he made the following remarks: "I certainly have no reason to feel any sympathy for Frick, and I am not sorry to hear that he has been shot, as he is now suffering as some of the honest toilers did at Homestead from Pinkerton bullets fired at his dictation. Frick's name should be hated by every honest man." There's stuff in McLuckie, no doubt about that.

The raid of the Pennsylvania troops on the property of Farmer John Smith, first treated as a great joke by the New York "Sun," is now referred to by that champion of the right of property as "more or less excusable foraging." The only ground of excuse suggested is that the soldiers had not eaten anything for half a day. But not a word of excuse, nothing but the bitterest condemnation, has yet appeared in the "Sun" for the conduct of the men who tore down Andrew Carnegie's fence to keep themselves from going hungry for half a year. Why is Carnegie's fence so much more sacred than John Smith's? Why treat one of these violations of property so leniently, and subject the other so fiercely to the severest requirements of principle? Simply because the latter was the work of laborers, while the former was the work of the hirelings employed by the brotherhood of thieves.

Nothing could better illustrate the servility of the human species than the cowardice displayed by the Pennsylvania militia in allowing one of their number to be strung up by the thumbs by the colonel of the regiment. Here were thousands of men, most of them sympathizing with the unfortunate victim, and holding everything in their own hands. With hardly more than a breath they could have annihilated their comrade's torturers. Muscles, numbers, weapons, — everything was theirs. But because they had been taught to obey, because they regarded an oath as sacred, in a word because they were a gang of miserable serfs, they allowed the cruel work to proceed. This was one of those emergencies calling for immediate action, when force is justifiable. It was not used. Private Iams, apparently the one honorable man in the Pennsylvania militia, was drummed out of camp to the tune of the "Rogue's March." If the laborers of America do not take him up and make a hero of him, they deserve no man's aid hereafter.

A Complete File of Liberty For Sale.

Readers of Liberty desirous of possessing the early volumes, now so rare, should remember that bids for them must reach me not later than August 13. The highest bidder will be given his choice of the following three sets, the second bidder to have second choice and the third bidder to take the remaining set:

1. A complete file of the first eight volumes of Liberty, unbound.
2. A set of the first three volumes of Liberty, bound in half morocco, red; first and second volumes bound together, the third separately.
3. Same as No. 2.

You Positively Must.

"Now you must eat this slice of beef; it is delicious."

"No, thank you, Madam."

"But you *positively must;* I will take no refusal. It is the last slice, and the best."

My hostess thrust it firmly and hastily upon my plate. I ate it to avoid further parley about a mere detail. She eyed me with furtive envy as I labored at it. I could see that she would have enjoyed it herself. And yet by a foolish sacrifice we both were martyred.

I swear there is no communism in stomachs.

Her husband entered later, a good fellow at a distance.

"I see they do not know the way to make you comfortable," he cried; "what! are you sitting in that hard chair? You *positively must* take this lounge; it is my favorite, the best in the house."

"But I prefer this seat, thank you."

"Ah! you cannot deceive me. I declare I must chop that wooden implement of torture into firewood."

He was a thin, nervous man, who worried over minute affairs as a terrier teases rats. These wearisome discussions would drag Jove from his mountains to the mud.

It is necessary to remark that I tend to obesity. I doubled up into his chair however, after a fashion, as an elephant might try to nestle in a hare's burrow. My chin and my knees were in close proximity.

What agony to my intervening acreage! This is too much.

Yonder sits mine host, rubbing his angular back from time to time upon the chair I covet.

I swear that I will not enter this temple of Discomfort and submit myself to these high priests of fashion for sacrifice again. I swear it by that which I hold henceforth most sacred. I swear it by myself.

MIRIAM DANIELL.

Disrespect for a Superior Race.

[Paris Figaro.]

A cabby nearly runs over two guardians of the peace standing on the boulevard.

"Did you see that?" says one of the guardians. "A little more, and he would have crushed us — like people!"

Awake!

See! Sons of Freedom, you have slain
Your Mother to your hurt and pain;
No more your life from her great breasts you drain.

Base Sons of Freedom! Slaves! this taunt
I hurl at you, your empty vaunt
Avails not now your enemies to daunt.

You slaves of slaves! In olden days
Brutes loved at cruel sport to gaze,
But men rejoice to tread more human ways.

Vile slaves of Dollars! You revive
The torture of the past and live
Dishonored, and no priest your souls may shrive.

One man in face of many spake
His thought; the thumb-screw and the stake
Must crush him lest a nobler freedom wake

And man as man asserts his right
To speak on earth by day or night
His verdict, unafraid of Craft and Might.

You hang a man up by his thumbs.
Good God! In Freedom's name what comes!
What savagery with blood and masks and drums!

A Nation hiring men to slay
Each other, so that it may play
The thief's part, learned of peoples now grown gray.

Slaves! You are fooled; the rich make wars
And blind you with the tinsel stars
That you may not perceive your prison bars.

They cry for armies, and they pay
Them with your money; you essay
To have your own, and straight hired bayonets sway.

You dream, although long since the night
Was beaten back by floods of Light,
Awake! Awake! Lead as you led the Right.

Wash your stained hands in the pure Sea
Whose waves call loud incessantly,
O States, to you to rise in Liberty.

Miriam Daniell.

Liberty.

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel." — PROUDHON.

☞ The appearance in the editorial column of articles over other signatures than the editor's initial indicates that the editor approves their central purpose and general tenor, though he does not hold himself responsible for every phrase or word. But the appearance in other parts of the paper of articles by the same or other writers by no means indicates that he disapproves them in any respect, such disposition of them being governed largely by motives of convenience.

Save Labor from Its Friends.

During the conflict now on between capital and labor, seldom a day passes without the shedding of blood. One of the most recent victims is a prominent leader of the forces of capital. The disaster that has befallen him has called out a display of grief on his behalf which, so far as it comes from the camp of labor, seems to me theatrical, and in which I certainly cannot share. Henry C. Frick, like Charles A. Dana, the godfather of his two-weeks-old son, is a conspicuous member of the brotherhood of thieves. In joining this nefarious band he took his life in his hands, and he knew it. It is but just to say that he has accepted his fate in the spirit of a bold bandit, without a cry or flinch. His pluck excites my admiration, but his suffering moves me to less pity than I would feel for the most ordinary cur. Why should I pity this man? What have he and I in common? Does he aspire, as I do, to live in a society of mutually helpful equals? On the contrary, it is his determination to live in luxury produced by the toil and suffering of men whose necks are under his heel. He has deliberately chosen to live on terms of hostility with the greater part of the human race. When such a man falls, my tears refuse to flow. I am scarcely sorry that he is suffering; I shall be still less sorry if he dies.

And yet I am very, very sorry that he has been shot.

Who is his assailant? I do not know Alexander Berkman, but I believe that he is a man with whom I have much in common, — much more at any rate than with such a man as Frick. It is altogether likely, despite the slanders in the newspapers, as insincere in their abuse as in their grief, that he would like to live on terms of equality with his fellows, doing his share of work for not more than his share of pay. There is little reason to doubt that his attitude toward the human race is one, not of hostility, but of intended helpfulness. And yet, as one member of the human race, I freely confess that I am more desirous of being saved from friends like Berkman, to whom my heart goes out, than from enemies like Frick, from whom my heart withdraws. The worst enemy of the human race is folly, and men like Berkman are its incarnation. It would be comparatively easy to dispose of the Fricks, if it were not for the Berkmans. The latter are the hope of the former. The strength of the Fricks rests on violence; now it is to violence that the Berkmans appeal. The peril of the Fricks lies in the spreading of the light; violence is the power of darkness. If the revolution comes by violence and in advance of light, the old struggle will have to be begun anew. The hope of humanity lies in the avoidance of that revolution by force which the Berkmans are trying to precipit. te.

No pity for Frick, no praise for Berkman, — such is the attitude of Liberty in the present crisis.

T.

The Production of Crime.

Of all quarters from which I expect a rational consideration of the subject of criminals and crime a prison chaplain is one of the last. This assumption will be amply borne out by a perusal of an article on "The Increase of Crime" in a recent number of the "Nineteenth Century." Some official statistics and references to recent criminal legislation and its consequences contained in the paper may serve, however, to point a few truths not without interest to Anarchists and the intelligent reader in general.

It appears that the official reports on crime in England in the year 1863 created such a panic that Law and Order fairly quaked with fright. The omniscient law-givers at once set to work to discover the cause of such an overflow of criminal activity as was manifested or manufactured in the prison reports. Success soon crowned the efforts of these noble Solons. The source of the evil which threatened the country was found. No! It wasn't an Anarchist conspiracy, nor a fresh crop of revolutionary dynamiters. They were not on the carpet in those days, but — well, something else was found. The augmented criminal record arose from the extreme leniency of the sentences. That was all. The discretion which judges were permitted to exercise in sentencing prisoners to terms of three or four years' penal servitude instead of five or more was solely responsible for the calamitous and dangerous state of affairs. And on the strength of this discovery the legislative machine went merrily to work. A law was enacted abolishing all sentences between two and five years' imprisonment. The country was saved. Law and Order had solved the problem and averted the danger. For twenty-seven years this monumental piece of legal wisdom has been in force. The prison chaplain informs us that it has cost the people unnecessarily the sum of $1,250,000, besides the countless years of living death which its victims have paid for the injustice. In 1870 the *great* Compulsory Education Act, the triumph of Liberal reforms, was passed by the government of Mr. Gladstone. We can judge of its efficiency as a crime-producer when we realize that since then the offences tried under the Act (to say nothing of those that never came to trial) have exceeded half a million cases.

A social purity agitation, got under way mostly by a parcel of fanatical, meddling old women (male and female) and brought to a head by an hysterical journalist posing as a moral Saviour of society — who afterwards admitted that the whole thing was a scheme to increase the circulation of his paper — culminated about the middle of 1885 in the passage of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. Law makers again to the rescue. If it meant anything, it meant that all women under the age of eighteen were either irresponsible idiots or helpless babes. Relations under any circumstances and abduction by consent of the girl or not rendered the male coadjutor a criminal under the Act. Morality was vindicated. Law and Order still reigned supreme.

The heavy increase in indictable offences since the measure has adorned the statute-book are chiefly due, according to our chaplain, to its potent and providential operation. We are not informed whether all the trumped-up charges and blackmailing cases of which it has been so fruitful are included in the enlarged statistics. Anyhow many a lusty young fellow has had occasion to taste its blessings and ample leisure to contemplate its moral value to society while doing a term of from two to ten years in accordance with the statute.

While the mill for the manufacture of criminals and crime is kept under steam in full working order, it is but just that we should expect a corresponding reinforcement of the staff employed to handle the increased product. Between the years 1870 and 1890 the police force in England expanded 44 per cent. In the last decade, while the population increased 11 per cent., its liveried guardians and protectors added 23 per cent. to their valuable numbers. The consequent financial increase in the burden of cost is much more rapid. The law-abiding and free population of about 27,000,000 are now paying over $20,000,000 a year to be thus taken care of. But the cost per head is rising very fast. Of course the law-and-crime-producing machinery continues in full swing.

Our worthy chaplain casually admits that much of the apparent growth of the criminal classes is owing to the annual creation of new crimes by statute, to the continual enlargement of the policeman's catechism of offences that were not illegal before. He never mentions, however, the effect of the Compulsory Vaccination Acts on statistics of crime. Nor the Custom House regulations which create the crime called smuggling. Nor the excise laws, nor the multitudinous liquor trade regulations. Nor the restrictions upon carrying arms and keeping dogs, and the thousand and one domestic and private affairs which legislation has seized upon to erect into illegalities and crimes. And employing language "which might tend to incite some person or persons unknown to murder certain other persons unknown" is not referred to as a cause of the swollen statistics, although recently D. J. Nicoll in London was apportioned eighteen months for putting the Saxon idiom to such a dreadfully criminal purpose. He does not even hint at the possibility of police-hatched plots, turned into Anarchist conspiracies, adding to the number of miscreants in English prisons, although a few months ago two men got ten years and one five for having in their desks pencil-drawings of what were supposed to be bombs with imperfect instructions in French for their manufacture. And the Irish-Americans who are now felons in the same jails because of the ingenious skill and professional ability of certain Brummagem detectives in planting dynamite about the said I-As' lodgings, and digging bombs out of their gardens after having sown them there, —

not one of these explanations of the increase of crime is even dreamt of by the good chaplain in his laborious article. No! Civilization, he fancies with J. J. Rousseau, enlarges our criminal classes. Large cities account for the growing tendency. Every 312 persons in London require a uniformed protector. The growth and concentration of property have much to do with it.

And there the matter rests — with our State stipendiary jail parson.

Well, my good masters, what do you think?

Has the State, think you, with its law-making mill always forging new fetters, its ever increasing army of bullies carrying stout clubs to rivet the links, its judges and lawyers to mystify its productions, its compulsory taxation to maintain all this, and its exactions, restrictions, prohibitions, privileges, and powers over the public, the individual, over everybody, in short, — has not this state of things, I say, got something, aye, everything to do with the increase of crime; and a great many evils besides? The State is the arch criminal; the others are for the most part merely its victims. Some day, when all men of intelligence see this — well, there will be less need for an Anarchist paper to point it out to them.

WILLIAM BAILIE.

Political Duty: A Confession of Skepticism.

[Concluded from No. 230]

"Invariable obedience to the officials is a duty because laws and men to enforce them are a necessity. Without them we should have mob-law and anarchy, and peaceful prosperity would be impossible."

Assuming that by "anarchy" is meant confusion (though such a use of the word is straining it from its derivation), we will look at this reason. It may be admitted that in the most general sense laws and men to execute them appear to be as necessary to civilized life as many other things called necessary. It is highly probable that, if the fundamental laws, or most of them, should be suddenly abolished, much confusion would follow, for a time, at least. But not all laws are fundamental; not all are even necessary in any sense; some are positively destructive to peaceful prosperity, while others exist, apparently, for no better reason than to remind the populace that they have masters. And surely it does not follow, because a certain measure of regulation is found indispensable, that officials who have, even with the authorization of other officials, done unjustly, should not be taught, in the most effective way, that some degrees of tyranny will not be endured. Besides, to allow any one class to exercise a monopoly of the use of force endangers freedom; men should be encouraged, and not forbidden, to defend themselves against outrage.

"But obedience to law is an American custom, and we ought to revere and follow the traditions of the fathers."

It is true that our laws are based upon the customs of the fathers, and moreover it is probably true that the various theories that have been invented, in all ages, to justify the ways of the officials to their fellows have been far less effective in restraining aggrieved subjects than the simple inertia of custom. Curiously enough, however, while the man who, in this age, practises ancestor-worship by clinging to the mechanical devices or the business methods of his grandfather is in danger of open ridicule, and the man who worships his grandfather by holding fast his theological prejudices subjects himself to a mild yet steadily growing contempt, the political and social dogmas embodied in the constitutions of our great-grandfathers and in the judicial decisions of *their* great-grandfathers are, in changed and unchanged forms, still widely respected in circles otherwise intelligent and progressive. Yet it is hard to see why the privilege of heresy, of innovation, should not be as freely accorded in one field as in another, and its practices judged, not arbitrarily, beforehand, but from the results of experience. "To be as good as our fathers," said Wendell Phillips, "we must be better"; and Thomas Jefferson explicitly urged the need of a radical innovation, in the form of a forcible popular uprising, about once in a generation. Innovations there must and will be, until the mind of man stops growing, and it seems highly desirable that all departments of activity should grow somewhat evenly together, and that those which, like the doing and enforcing of equity, have lagged behind the rest, should be brought up into line. We doubtless owe much of the social tension of to-day to the working of the new wine of Industrial Innovation, in the cob-webbed and dusty wine-skins of Ancient Proprietary Custom. And the remedy is — more symmetrical growth.

And now, recurring to the main question, and having considered the various arguments which appear in such a variety of forms and are supposed to be so conclusive, I must answer it in the negative. The strict obligation, binding upon all, to obey the lawful commands of the official class is, in my opinion, a political fiction of the same general character as the ecclesiastical fiction of papal infallibility. Mankind is an ever-changing mass of growing individuals: endless variation is a law of life, and especially of civilized life. Interference by one in the affairs of another, which is constantly going on, in all sorts of ways and by all sorts of people, cannot fairly be judged by cast-iron rules based either on the customs of the past or the dicta of any class, however chosen, but should be freshly considered in the light of all its circumstances and of the facts of human experience up to date, so far as known. And the action of the official meddler, like that of the private meddler (since neither of them can, in the nature of things, ever be authorized beyond question), should in fairness be considered as upon his own risk and responsibility, and that of those who voluntarily support and uphold him. Resistance to official action, then, may be, and in fact often is, as justifiable as any other kind of self-defence. Though A and B may have agreed to authorize C to coerce or punish D, still D, if he has not agreed to the arrangement, is not necessarily bound to submit, even though his ancestors and his neighbors have all been used to submit in like cases; 'tis never too late to start a new custom. How far he may be justified in carrying his resistance must ever be an open question, depending on circumstances and opinions.

The fundamental errors underlying the institution of government as it exists in civilized countries are, first, the idea that large numbers of people, differing widely in birth, education, and surroundings, ought to conform to a large number of uniform rules; and, second, the idea that it is possible, by means of legal formalities, to give to some people rightful, exclusive privileges of ruling, for longer or shorter periods, over the rest. These false assumptions furnish a basis for the humbug of legislation, with its attendant mischiefs; the *criminalizing* of numbers of innocent actions, which confuses the moral ideas of the young and ignorant; the creation of market-values attaching to offices, special legal privileges, permissions, and immunities from arrest, which market-values are as surely produced by legislation as a head of water is produced by damming a stream; compulsory contribution, or taxation, with its wasting of wealth and destructive diversion of industry; political wars, in which the persons most to blame, instead of killing each other, are able to involve millions of their respective countrymen, who might, but for them, mind their own peaceful business; and many others. The evils of habitual government, instead of arising, as some think, from imperfect administration of a body of substantially perfect laws (though how such laws could have been made, under either past or existing conditions, is not clear), probably spring from the unfitness of the institution itself for human needs. Given a people who work on the theory that men of ordinary sanity must have guardians chosen regularly from their number in order to square the lives of all with the customs of the fathers, and a widespread perversion of effort will surely follow, whereby the growth of honest and industrious producers of wealth will be hindered, and the manufacture of petty tyrants, favorites, bribers, hypocrites, and slaves will be encouraged. So long as the nature and environment of humanity compel men to differ on many matters of common interest, so long will habitual government, no matter with what fashionable fallacies it may be cloaked, be the rule of one class of men over the rest. It is extremely improbable that any class of men exists with sufficient intelligence and forbearance to rule a large community and give substantial equality of privilege; it is certain that there is no known method of securing such men. Apologists for the principles of existing governments seem not to understand that the only thing that could make legislative and judicial decrees binding, in spite of private judgment, upon the consciences of intelligent men, is precisely the thing that has never yet appeared and probably never will, — to wit, a demonstration that the men who enacted the said decrees possessed, at the time, that ideal wisdom and goodness which is generally considered (and with good reason) to be out of human reach. From nothing comes nothing; how, then, can a law be more sacred than the men who made it?

It is not here contended, of course, that our rulers are always useless or harmful, but that, while they are quite as likely to be useless and harmful as other men, a superstitious regard for ancient customs causes men to act towards them, in many ways, as if they were not. There is, it is true, a desirability, which sometimes may fairly be called a general necessity, that many of the things they are chosen to do should be done. It does not, however, follow that men who either cannot see the necessity or prefer to have it satisfied in some other way are under any obligation to assist or pay the politically-authorized persons merely because the men called legislators have commanded it, nor that they who do the necessary things have any more or better right

to do them than others have. The farther the ruling classes, as such, go beyond actions proper for the common defence against imminent or actually-existing calamities and for the economical maintenance of works used in common by nearly all; the more they theorize about National Dignity, Education, Prevention of Vice, Stimulation of Virtue, Regulation of Industry, and the like, and put their theories into practice to the profit of a few and at the expense of all the rest, the more absurd do their pretensions to rightful authority appear, and the more urgent becomes the need for some form of resistance.

And though resistance does not of necessity imply violence on the part of those who resist, yet officials who are disposed (as officials often are) to enforce an unjust law at all hazards have only themselves and their advisers to blame if, on such occasions, the timeworn notion of Political Duty shall give way before the juster, more modern, and more reasonable idea of equality of privilege, or Equal Rights. Intimidation, violence, and bloodshed are bad, but — "let *messieurs the policemen* set the example"!

T. P. PERKINS.

The Rule of the Fight.—A Fable.

Now it so happened that it came to pass that His Excellency the State became exceeding wroth against His Insignificancy the Individual. So it happened that he did therefore challenge the said insignificancy to do mortal combat with him.

So they met; and His Insignificancy did then and there throw a small round object, which was also black, at His Excellency, hurting him greatly, with exceeding pain, whereupon he exclaimed in great anger:

"Wretch, brute—you—beer-drinking bomb-thrower—you—do you not know—are you not aware—that the rule of the fight is that only I do the striking?"

Whereupon he proceeded to extinguish His Insignificancy the Individual.

Whereupon, also, there was much approval among the spectators. GEORGE FORREST.

The Coach and Four.

Here's a millionaire, Bill,
In a coach and four;
Come along and stare, Bill,
Ain't 'em five galore?

But how did he get rich, Bill,
Often puzzles me;
He never did a stitch, Bill,
We makes slop duds for he.

If I'd got an hour, Bill,
I'd soon find out why
He's on a coach and four, Bill;
Do the same would I,

If it's honest?—But, Bill,
If he is a thief,
We'd rather have our hut, Bill,
And crust's my belief.

If it's straight and fair, Bill,
Which I think it ain't,
We'd be sitting there, Bill,
Or wear our war paint.

There's a man called Tucker, Bill,
Says he's found out why;
When you're in a pucker, Bill,
Jest read Liberty.

Miriam Daniell.

Triumphant Democracy.

Foxy Frick
Takes the trick;
The canny Scot
Rakes the pot;
Men ask for bread,
Feed them lead:
Democracy
Triumphant,—see?

Harry Lyman Koopman.

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